

**Meeting Date:** August 6, 2024  
**Department:** Community Services  
**Report No.:** CS-2024-29  
**Submitted by:** Robert Lilbourne, Director of Community Services  
**Approved by:** Trisha McKibbin, Chief Administrative Officer  
**SUBJECT:** **Update on Flood Damage**

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**RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Council receive Report CS-2024-29 Update on Flood Damage for information.**

**BACKGROUND:**

The municipality experienced two significant rainfalls during the week of July 7 to 13, 2024, resulting in severe flooding in Cuddy Sports Fields, Alexandra Park, Centennial Park, and Victoria Park. These areas, being floodplains, responded as expected.

The region has had an unusually wet spring and summer, which kept the water table high. Consequently, with the two significant rainfalls occurring only days apart, the floodwaters did not recede as usual due to the already saturated ground, causing the water to remain stagnant.

Flooding is a regular occurrence in this area, and the park typically manages it effectively. However, this flood was different due to the rapid rise of the river and the extended time it took for the floodwaters to recede. The length of time for the flood waters to recede has caused greater damage than a typical flood event. This flood has choked out grass, deposited silt in many locations and has caused what playground safety surfacing remains to be removed due to contamination, smell and compaction.

**COMMENTS:**

Due to the increased damage that has occurred with this flood event, staff have inquired about initiating an insurance claim. Below is a list of items that staff have currently identified which need to be addressed immediately or in the near future.

**Alexandra Park**

**Playgrounds** – Safety Surfacing in both playgrounds – needs to be excavated down 12 to 14” to install new surfacing with Geo fabric - Approximately \$25,000.00+. Play sand to be fully removed and replaced.

**Foot bridges** – inspection to determine further damages (erosion)

**Baseball Diamond** – extensive turf damage – requires top dressing and overseeding. Diamond clay material is contaminated with silt – the top layer (1”) is to be removed and replaced with new clay. Dugouts need power washing and repainted. Raise three (3) sunken irrigation control boxes.

**Picnic Tables** – 6 missing – approximately \$700.00 to a \$1,000.00 per table

**Ball Storage Building** – clay and chalk need to be replaced

**Pavilions** – require clean up and painting of main posts

**Trees** – all new trees require wood fibre replaced at the base of trees – still accessing if any have died due to floodwaters.

**Trail** – assessment needs to occur and repair to damaged areas that have washed out

**Storyboards** – require new Lexan

**Parking Lot** – requires clean up and has base material washed out needs to be inspected

**Sutera Dog Waste Container** – hydro vacuumed due to floodwaters.

### **Cuddy Sports Complex**

**Storage Building** – Will require assessment, and a restoration company to remediate.

**Soccer Fields** – Still requires further assessment, but expect to require some top dressing, overseeding, and fertilizer

**Trail** - assessment needs to occur and repair to damaged areas that have washed out.

### **Victoria and Centennial Park**

**Turf** - covered in silt and mud – further assessment is required to determine if further action is required such as overseeding

**Picnic Tables** – 4 missing – approximately \$700.00 to \$1,000.00 per table

**Foot bridges** – inspection to determine further damages (erosion)

**Trees** – all new trees require wood fibre replaced at the base of trees – still accessing if any have died due to floodwaters.

Staff have been doing their best with the limited resources available to rehabilitate the turf areas, clean up the parks, and make necessary repairs. However, due to the extent and nature of the damage, most of this work will need to be performed by outside contractors.

Given the sensitivity of the safety surfacing and the public's expectations for safe and usable playgrounds, staff have contacted a contractor to remove the contaminated wood fibre. Additionally, they have found a provider of engineered wood fiber that can be installed via blowing which will require less staff time. As of the time of writing this report, the work has not yet started, but it is expected that the new safety surfacing will be in place during the week of August 6, 2024. This will allow residents and visitors to enjoy the playground and splash pad for the remainder of the summer.

**CONSULTATION:**

Supervisor of Parks and Recreational Facilities  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Director of Finance

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

If this is to become an insurance claim the deductible (\$25,000) will be taken from one of the recreation reserves. If it is not deemed insurable then staff would be looking at several of the recreation reserves to cover the cost.

**ALTERNATIVE(S) TO THE RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Council to provide alternate direction.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

Local Infrastructure and Capital Investment: Households and businesses in Strathroy-Caradoc will be supported by reliable, financially responsible, and well-maintained infrastructure networks.

Community Well-being and Quality of Life: Residents of all ages in Strathroy-Caradoc will have access to community amenities and activities that are accessible and support active lifestyles and wellbeing.

Municipal Customer Service: The Municipality offers seamless, responsive service and an exceptional experience for every customer.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None